

Orange County Compact Program, the largest mentoring program in the State of Florida. I also had the privilege of serving as a mentor myself to two students at Boone High School in Orlando, where I attended.

I have been a big believer in mentoring programs since I was a small child. Back when I was in elementary school, my mom, who was a single parent, thought it would be a good idea for me to have a mentor. She went down to the Big Brothers Big Sisters organization and arranged for me to have a mentor.

My mentor throughout my childhood was a man named Tom Luke. Tom has worked for the Orlando Sentinel, which is a local paper in Orlando, Florida, for the past 28 years as their manager of the computer services department.

Tom, along with my mom, played a very key role in mentoring me as a child. They are, in large part, responsible for whatever success I may have today.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to address the educational benefits of the Mentoring for Success Act, particularly as it relates to preventing children from dropping out of high school.

In my home State of Florida, we had a big problem: Only 53 percent of our children were graduating from high school. So we in the Orlando area decided to do something about it. We created what is known as the Orlando/Orange County Compact Program. That is a mentoring program that matches up students who are at risk of dropping out of public high schools with mentors from the business community who work with these young people 1 hour a week. It is sort of like a Big Brothers Big Sisters program.

The results from this mentoring program have been dramatic. Over the past 10 years, 98 percent of the children in the Compact Program in Orlando have graduated from high school, the number one graduation rate in the United States. Let me give just one example of how this program is successful, because this is exactly the type of program that the Mentoring for Success Act seeks to create.

There was a young 18-year-old African American man named Lenard who was attending Jones High School, which is an inner city school in Orlando. Lenard was struggling in school. He was making Ds and Fs. He was skipping school. He had been arrested for selling drugs. He announced that he was intending to drop out of school.

Lenard agreed to be in the Compact Program on one condition. He said, "Just do not give me a white mentor. Naturally, we assigned Lenard a white mentor, an AT&T executive named Paul Hurley. To make a long story short, Lenard's mentor developed a friendship with him, and met with him every week. By Lenard's senior year, he went on to become Orange County's student of the year."

In his senior year, Lenard won a raffle at Jones High School. The winner got two tickets to the Orlando Magic basketball game, great seats. He called his mentor and said, "Hey, I just won two tickets to the Orlando Magic game tonight." His mentor replied, "That is great. Why don't you ask your best friend?" Lenard said, "That is why I called you." Mentoring makes a difference, one child at a time.

Finally, I would like to discuss the crime prevention benefits of this important legislation. In Florida, 70 percent of the inmates in our jails and prisons are high school dropouts. It costs the taxpayers \$25,000 a year for each of these prisoners in our Federal prisons, compared to only \$5,000 a year to educate a child in the public schools.

Clearly, making this small investment in mentoring now will save us hundreds of millions of dollars down the road in reduced prison and welfare costs.

In summary, the Mentoring for Success Act sponsored by Coach Osborne and myself will make a meaningful difference in the lives of young people, will improve education, will prevent crime, will save us money, and I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation and vote yes on this important bill.

#### APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES). Without objection, and pursuant to clause 11 of rule X and clause 11 of rule I, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence to fill the existing vacancy thereon:

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota.

There was no objection.

#### SHIPBUILDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, events are once again turning the world's eyes to the Pacific. Indonesia continues to be unsettled. North Korea is abandoning its move towards conciliation. And every American is aware of the provocative actions recently undertaken by China in holding 24 Americans captive.

Secretary Rumsfeld has stated that this administration will put a new emphasis on the Pacific. That is wise. But to carry out that intention across such a broad expanse of water will require ships.

Demand for naval forces has not gone away with the Cold War; it has increased. Yet, at current build rates, the overall fleet will sink below 300 ships

before the decade is out, on a course for Davy Jones' locker. We are already missing missions today. How dire will the situation be with a 200-ship fleet?

I am not much given to dramatic statements, Mr. Speaker, but let me say this clearly: America should rebuild its Navy, and we should begin now.

To rebuild requires far more than simply stabilizing the size of the fleet. The Navy does not get anywhere by treading water. Instead, we have to reverse the trend in shipbuilding. A wise man used to say that the Navy is moving to a smaller fleet to meet its worldwide commitments, but the world is just as wide. That man's name was Norman Sisisky, and nobody in this House, nobody was more dedicated to reversing the trend in shipbuilding than our good friend from Virginia.

By the way, I believe that "Norman Sisisky" would make an excellent name for a capital ship.

Why build more ships? Because it is presence, American presence, that helps avoid war: presence in peacetime, at pierside, showing our allies tangible proof of American support; and presence in the theater, exercising, working with allied navies, and serving notice to all that America is not thousands of miles away, it is just over the horizon. Naval presence is an open hand that can quickly become an iron fist should the need arise.

We can focus on the Pacific all we like, but maintaining a strong naval presence there requires more ships than we have now. Then, what of our commitment to Europe, the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, the Middle East?

Ships require sailors. Sea duty is hard and challenging. It can be heart-breaking. The sailor is the backbone of the Navy. While some question whether sea duty is still that service's highest calling, there is no doubt in the mind of this son of a sailor that it should be.

It is not just the duties at sea that make the sailors so valuable, it is their presence in foreign ports, showing citizens around the world that Americans are open, friendly, and interested in their country. That is as much a benefit of naval presence as the speedy response to crises that may emerge.

A rebuilt Navy should be able to operate from shoreline to shoreline, on the surface, above, and below. That will require a range of ships: small ships, to operate in close; medium ships, to provide cover for the smaller ships in shore, but able to keep station with battle groups as needed; submarines, capable of operation in all waters and able to carry land attack missiles and support special operations forces; and heavy capital ships, to maintain freedom of the seas.

Ships do not just happen, we must build them. We must equip them. We must provide a trained and ready crew. That all takes resources and commitment, resources from Capitol Hill and a